

Dependency of Electronic Resources and Information by the faculty Members of Pondicherry University and its affiliated colleges – A Study

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Abstract—*Information and Communication Technology (ICT) revolution has created a new trend in the field of publishing industry to switch over from print materials to electronic media due to which information professionals are witnessing increased availability of electronic or web based resources. Resulted to e-resources have been frequently used for study, research and teaching purposes as well. This study has been taken up to investigate the ability and use of Electronic Resources by the faculty of Pondicherry University and its affiliated colleges. It was conducted through a questionnaire based survey of the respondents. This study finds out the problems faced in accessing e-resources purpose and frequency of use etc., it also recommends some suggestions to improve e-reference services based on the findings of the study.*

Keywords— *e-resources, Pondicherry University, e-publishing*

I. INTRODUCTION

The faculty members who have their information needs met through many ways. It is not necessary they have to visit the library in person to use the print formats but can stay at home or the office and access online library resources and services through networks or authentication methods at any time provided only if the library is facilitated with the latest infrastructure of Information technology.

Information must be accessible, reliable, precise, and apt. To fulfill the needs and requirements of faculty for academic and high-quality information, the University libraries have been choose and follow by choice of electronic resources to provide information and services.

Electronic resources have go off in popularity and use. They enable innovation in teaching, and they increase timeliness in research as well as increase discovery and creation of new fields of inquiry. Other reasons for faculty to use e-resources include relating to increasingly computer-literate faculty and keeping up to date in their fields.

The teaching faculty members see these resources as easier to access and search. Availability of e-resources has changed what users actually read and use. They have now inclined to use only what is easily accessible. Access to e-resources has considerably reduced the time taken for searching the information.

Access will be as good as the resources which can be afforded with number of computers and existence of network systems, the ability to work with the tools, and the network infrastructure that supports rapid and convenient connections. The ability to use e-resources efficiently depends on the basis of computer skills, knowledge of what is available and how to use it, and ability to define a research problem. Faculty, apart from the work—teaching and research, must know how to access the information. Computer-literate faculty may feel more comfortable using electronic information sources and thus gain more from using them. How faculty attain the above skills and knowledge depends on many factors, such as their disciplines, academic status and ranks, ages, access (hardware and location) to electronic resources, and training. Factors motivating the use of e-resources, how useful they have found them, and for which purposes they use e-resources.

The following table shows the resources of the library of Pondicherry University. The details of which can be reached at pondiuni.edu.in. The total number of members in the University is 5000 of which the faculty alone on the roll is 413 in the University.

LIBRARY COLLECTIONS OF LIBRARY OF PONDICHERRY UNIVERSITY

DOCUMENT TYPE	COLLECTION
Books	1,91,820
Theses - Ph.D.	705
Dissertation - M. Phil	4,748
Reports	532
UN Documents	2,060
Magazines	40
Total No. of Journals - Print	366
National-188	
International-178	
Back Volumes	10,134
E-Resources	33,195
E-Books - 7,455	
E-resources - 24,169 (UGC INFONET - 7,953 PU Subscription – 17,131)	
E-Databases - 36	36
E-Theses - 620	620
Library Members	5000+

The library plays a very important role to its members (faculty) in extending instructional services such as orientation and training in use of library resources. If efficient and effective use is to be made of library's e-resources, then the users training will have to increase in both intensity and coverage. It is important to remember that the ability of library staff to keep up to date is necessary, and, therefore, training for them is vital as well.

II. E-PUBLISHING

E-publishing is the production of documents in computer-readable form for distribution to the users over a computer network or in other formats such as CD-ROMs. Electronic publishing is a new technology to deliver books and other contents to users who are far away able to access very easily and quickly. It is also known as desktop publishing, online publishing, web publishing. The main reason is the technology allows the publishers to send the information to users quickly and efficiently and effectively. Obviously it makes major changes in the publishing industry. To use this, it is required to have new hardware and software devices. It has variety of publishing models as well such as CD.Eg., (Compact Disc + Extended Graphics), CD-ROM documents, Acrobat documents, ROM documents, web pages, online publications. Creation of texts and graphic images and reproduce them become very easy with the help of computer technology.

III. REVIEWS ; USE OF ELECTRONIC RESOURCES:

Sharma (2009) identifies e-resources to include journals, data archives, manuscripts, maps, books, magazines, theses, newspapers, e-mail, research reports, and bibliographic databases. Ibrahim (2004) adds library websites, online catalogues, and online reference works, while Aramide and Bolarinwa (2010), mention A-V resources, instructional audio tapes, instructional video tapes, VCD/DVD, radio, television, multimedia projectors, e-resources-electronic databases, e.g., JSTOR, ERIC, e-documents, Internet/e-mail facility, CD-ROMS, computers, telephone facility (GSM/Landline), VSAT, printers, and digital cameras.

Omotayo (2010), Thanuskodi (2010), Sharma (2009), Borrego (2007), and Ibrahim (2004) have all reported that e-journals are the most used among the arrays of available electronic resources.

As reported by Omotayo (2010) 22 (8.98%), 67 (37.35%), 102 (41.63%), 34 (13.88%) and 20 (8.16%) of the total population of 245 used electronic journals daily, weekly, monthly, bi-monthly and occasionally respectively. A majority use e-journals monthly, while 52% of total population in Borrego, et al. (2007) stated that they use electronic journals exclusively or mainly.

Thanuskodi (2010) identified and tested ten e-journal sources: Highwire Press, MedBio World, Ingeta, All Health Net, Blackwell Synergy, Medind, Science Direct, LWW Online, Springer Link, and Health Inter Network India and found that the respondents preferred the Highwire Press CD-ROM database with a mean score of 4.15 on a 5 point rating scale.

Dependency of Electronic Resources and Information by the faculty Members of Pondicherry

According to Sharma (2009), the second highest preference in terms of e-resources usage after e-journals is the Web and e-mail with 30 (57.69%) and 41 (78.84%) among teachers, whereas 23 (76.66%) and 18 (60.00%) among research scholars use them, respectively.

Salaam and Adegboire (2010) discovered that search engines are an essential electronic resource for students of private universities in Ogun State, with 51 (45.95%) of the total population of 111 using them very frequently.

In the study by Bar-Ilan, Peritz, and Wolman (2003), most respondents (69.2%) stated that they used databases and electronic journals for both teaching and research, compared with 23.9% who used them exclusively for research and only 0.6% who used them exclusively for teaching.

T-test analyses were conducted by Ibrahim (2004) to measure use of e-resources and detect factors that deter effective and frequent use. A criterion of less than 0.05 was used to determine the significance of use. Figures show that frequency of use of e-resources was significantly low for most types of e-resources. The least frequently used e-resources were e-books ($t = 2.10$, $p < 0.05$), the online catalogue ($t = 2.65$, $p < 0.05$) and bibliographic databases ($t = 2.60$, $p < 0.05$). For comparison, online reference works ($t = 2.86$, $p < 0.05$), e-journals ($t = 2.70$, $p < 0.05$) and full-text articles ($t = 2.78$, $p < 0.05$) were found to be more popular, even though they still fell below the anticipated frequency in the survey's set mean.

In a JSTOR survey, it was found that faculty members from humanities, economics, and social sciences use online catalogues, full-text electronic journal databases, and abstracting and indexing databases most frequently and they expect to use them more extensively in the future (Finholt and Brooks 1997).

IV. OBJECTIVES

The main purpose of the study is to determine faculty's ability to use of e-resources; faculty's access to computers and use of e-resources, both number and frequency; and the areas of training needed by faculty to utilize e-resources efficiently and effectively and to recommend how the library could identify the requirement of trainings and what strategies the library could use to improve service as well as what areas the library could research further.

V. METHODOLOGY

The present study was carried out with the sample of faculty members of Pondicherry University and the colleges which are affiliated to the University. It was a survey based study conducted by using structured questionnaire to examine the use of e-resources, purposes of using e-resources, etc. The investigator administered a total number of 800 questionnaires among the faculty of the University and other colleges as well for which only 625 duly filled-in questionnaires were received back. Stratified random sampling technique has been deployed for the selection of population for the study. For the present study, the investigator visited the faculty of Pondicherry University and approached the faculty to collect the necessary data. The data collected through questionnaires were organized and tabulated by using statistical methods.

VI. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

(Table-1)

Designation	Certificate Course	Diploma	Degree	Gained by experience	Orientation course	others	Total
Professor	6 (18.8)	4 (9.52)	18 (11.25)	34 (16.75)	16 (14.29)	3 (4)	81 (12.96)
Assistant Professor	9 (27.27)	25 (59.52)	96 (60)	112 (55.17)	67 (59.82)	41 (54.67)	350 (56)
Associate Professor	18 (54.55)	13 (30.95)	46 (28.75)	57 (28.08)	29 (25.89)	31 (41.33)	194 (31.04)
Total	33	42	160	203	112	75	625

Table (1) shows the skills of faculty members in ICT technology based on which computer operation can be done efficiently, without anybody's assistance for getting required information from the Internet and retrieves the relevant information from the various databases available in the University Library portal.

(Table-2)
OPINION ABOUT FREQUENCY IN USING THE E-RESOURCES

Designation	Daily	Several times a week	Once in a week	Few times in a month	Less frequently	Total
Professor	22 (12.29)	29 (14.57)	15 (11.81)	9 (11.84)	6 (13.64)	81 (13)
Assistant Professor	96 (53.6)	118 (59.3)	72 (56.69)	41 (53.95)	23 (52.27)	350 (56)
Associate Professor	61 (34.08)	52 (26.3)	40 (31.5)	26 (34.21)	15 (34.09)	194 (31.04)
Total	179	199	127	76	44	625

Table (2) clearly shows that the usage of e-resources among the faculty of different categories. The e-resources usage is considerably increased.

(Table- 3)
.BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE THAT HELPS IN ACCESSING E-RESOURCES

Types of institution	Adequate	May be improved	Total
Pondicherry	193 (49.8)	92 (38.66)	285 (45.6)
Aided	106 (27.39)	74 (31.09)	180 (28.8)
Self financing	88 (22.74)	72 (30.25)	160 (25.6)
Total	387	238	625

Table (3) shows the status of infrastructure facility provided in the University, aided colleges and other self financing colleges. The infrastructure facility requires to be improved in some of the self financing colleges and aided colleges for effective use of e-resources provided by the University.

(Table-4)
OPINION ABOUT E-RESOURCES SERVICES PROVIDED IN THE UNIVERSITY

Designation	Very Satisfied	Quite Satisfied	Can not tell	Quite Unsatisfied	Very Unsatisfied	Total
Professor	140 (48.11)	192 (69.06)	18 (33.96)	0 (0)	0	350 (56)
Assistant Professor	111 (38.14)	56 (20.14)	26 (49.06)	0 (0)	1 (50)	194 (31.04)
Associate Professor	40 (13.75)	30 (10.79)	9 (16.98)	1 (100)	1 (50)	81 (12.96)
Total	291	278	53	1	50	625

Table (4) portrays the service provided in their respective institutions for using the e-resources. Only very few are very satisfied with the service provided by their institution and others are not up to the level of expectation.

(Table - 5)
OPINION ABOUT RESEARCH SCHOLARS WHO USE E-RESOURCES FOR THEIR COURSE STUDY

Designation	Yes	No	Total
Professor	64 (12.4)	17 (15.74)	81 (12.96)
Assistant Professor	287 (55.62)	63 (58.33)	350 (56)
Associate Professor	166 (32.17)	28 (25.93)	194 (31.04)
Total	516	108	625

Table (5) represents as to whether the research scholars are using the e-resources only for their course study. Not all of them are using the resources for their course study and they are using the resources for other purposes as well.

VII. FINDINGS

On the basis of the results and opinions of the respondents, the present study lights on the following facts:

- Undoubtedly the use of electronic resources steadily increasing with time.
- Age and/or academic position are inversely related to the use of electronic resources and electronic journals.
- It is very clear that there is a gradual decreasing in the use of printed journals as users prefer and use the electronic format more.
- With increased use and as the result the users access the electronic format more frequently.
- The use of a journal is not necessarily an indication of the preference of users. There may be an increase in the acceptance and frequency of use of the electronic format merely because the traditional print format is no longer easily available.
- Accessibility and desktop access, home access, ease of retrieval, and hyperlinks to outside content were the arguments cited most often as the advantages of electronic journals. The
- disadvantages mentioned most often were the lack of back issues and problems with reading a text from the computer screen.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The present study has explored the e-resources facility and their access by the faculty in the Pondicherry University, Puducherry. It was found that majority of the respondents are aware of having access to e-resources for different purposes like study, update knowledge, thesis and dissertation works, etc. The University library subscribes a good number of e-resources and it provides access facilities to their faculty members and other faculty members who are working in colleges which have got affiliation by the University. It is really surprising that very few respondents mentioned that they access e-resources at University Library. The members of Pondicherry University library are facilitated by providing wi5 enabled connectivity to access the resources and each and every one of the faculty members have been provided with a desktop in their respective seats along with a printer. Remote login access is also possible in this University despite all this; the usage of the resources must improve only if they are properly trained with searching technology.

The awareness of respondents of the e-resources was quite impressive. The library professionals should take necessary steps to enhance their awareness and utilization of the availability of the e-resources in the library. A very meager percentage of the respondents reacted that they possess search skills and capabilities. This should be kept in mind while conducting the training programme for the library cliental. It is very interesting that majority of the respondents unanimously mentioned that well-thought out hands-on training programme is necessary to improve the search skills and search result of e-resources. Majority of the respondents felt that the number of terminals to access the e-resources should be increased to avoid the rush and prolonged waiting for the system. The study concludes that in this digital era, more facilities for the easy access of e-resources should be facilitated in the college library for the effective and efficient utilization of e-resources for their various academic purposes.

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